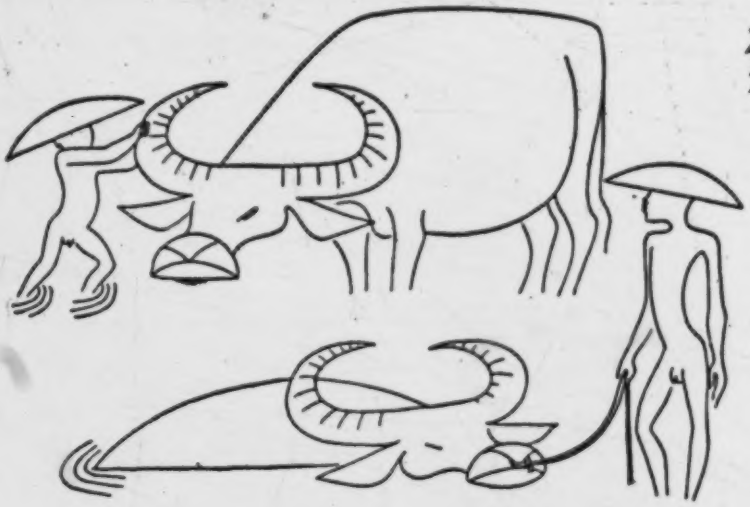
2: Covarrubias R-5 (1930-1933) 1938
OF7 Bali OF7

CHAPTER III



231
291

THE COMMUNITY

THE VILLAGE

The capitals of the princes' districts, the seats of the regencies, 361
are commercialized half-European, half-Chinese towns like Den [621]
Pasar and Buleleng; but the true life of Bali is concentrated in
thousands of villages and hamlets. With their thatched roofs
they lie buried under awnings of tropical vegetation, the groves
and gardens that provide for the needs of the villagers. Out of
the chartreuse sea of ricefields they surge like dark green islands [245]
of tall palms, breadfruit, mango, papaya, and banana trees.

Underneath the cool darkness, pierced only by the shafts of 351
sunlight that sift through the mesh of leaves, are the houses hid-
den from view by interminable mud walls that are broken at regu-
lar intervals by long narrow gates. All the gates are alike: two
mud pillars supporting a small roof of thick thatch, giving access

5: Belo E-5 (1931-1934)1935 OF7 Bali OF7

decided that at dawn of the next day the men should not go to their work in the coffee gardens, but gather at the house of I Lèwèr and Ni Jungir. There they should tear down the cursed house, every post and board and rafter of it, and carry it away out of the sacred limits of the village to the unholy (*tĕngĕt*) land on the edge of the graveyard (*watĕs sĕmă*). And the father and the mother and the new-born twins should be banished (*kĕtundung*) from the village, to camp on the unholy ground for one month and seven days (*asasih pitung dină*). So did the village law decree. And during the time of banishment neither the father nor the mother of the twins might approach the village for any reason whatsoever. Their relatives would bring them rice, and the people of the village help to guard them at night from the dangers of the unholy place where they must sleep.

Furthermore all the hundred and seventy-five men who belonged to the Balé Agung, although they came from the four distinct divisions of the village, Tanah Dăhă, Dajan Balé Agung, Kauh and Kangin, these men and their families would be for forty-two days [1]) unclean (*sĕbĕl*). The doors of the temples must be closed, no one might venture even into the outer court, nor might he step into the little square of holy land on which is built his *sanggah*, the household shrine.

At the end of this period there must be a great ceremony for the purification (*mĕrĕyaschitä*) of the village, for the turning off of the curse (*malik sumpah*) on the unfortunate (*lachur*) parents, with many offerings both to the gods (*batarä*) and to the demons and bad spirits (*kală bută*). When these ceremonies have been accomplished, the people of the village will again be allowed to enter the temples to worship the gods. But the great feast, the *usabă*, which was to have fallen on the next full moon but one, six and a half weeks after the birth of the twins, had to be

[1]) The *sasih* is a month of 35 days. This month, plus seven days, makes forty-two days.